Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 PARIS 12008 01 OF 02 171215Z

46
ACTION SS-30

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /031 W
---------- 058639
O R 171121Z MAY 74
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9220
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
USMISSION EC BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY DUBLIN
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG
AMEMBASSY ROME
USMISSION NATO

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 PARIS 12008

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, FR
SUBJECT: US-EC NINE CONSULTATIONS

REFS: A) STATE 96829 B) PARIS 11128 (EXDIS)

1. SUMMARY: THE GUIDANCE IN REFTEL A IS TIMELY AND HELPFUL IN EXPLAINING US POSITIONS. WE OFFER IN THIS TELEGRAM OUR THOUGHTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON THREE ASPECTS OF CONSULTATIONS: (A) INITIATIVE, (B) THE KEY DISTINCTION BETWEEN "INFORMING" AND "CONSULTING", AND (C) THE VARIOUS LEVELS AT WHICH CONSULTATIONS WOULD BE MOST FRUITFUL. END SUMMARY.

2. DURING THE PAST SEVERAL WEEKS QUAI OFFICIALS HAVE SEEMED MORE OPEN AND RELAXED IN DISCUSSING US/EC RELATIONS. WE EXPECT THE NEW FRENCH GOVERNMENT TO REVIEW US/EC CONSULTATIONS AS PART OF A GENERAL POST-ELECTION
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PAGE 02 PARIS 12008 01 OF 02 171215Z

EXAMINATION OF FRANCE'S ROLE IN EUROPE AND VIS-A-VIS

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

THE UNITED STATES. WE BELIEVE CONSULTATIONS SHOULD BE HIGH ON THE AGENDA OF ISSUES WHICH THE UNITED STATES SHOULD BE PREPARED TO DISCUSS WITH THE FRENCH AND OTHER EUROPEAN GOVERNMENTS AFTER THE FRENCH ELECTIONS. WE OFFER THE FOLLOWING THOUGHTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS AS A CONTRIBUTION TO THIS PROCESS.

3. TO BE MEANINGFUL, AS REFTEPOINTS OUT, CONSULTATIONS MUST IMPLY A RECIPROCAL OBLIGATION. WE CANNOT EXPECT THE EUROPEANS TO CONSULT WITH US IF WE ARE NOT WILLING TO CONSULT WITH THEM. THERE MUST ALSO BE, IN OUR VIEW, A WILLINGNESS ON BOTH SIDES TO INITIATE CONSULTATIONS WHERE APPROPRIATE EVEN BEFORE A REQUEST IS MADE BY THE OTHER SIDE. THE US OR THE EC MAY BE UNAWARE OF THE OTHER'S PLANS ON A PARTICULAR ISSUE WHICH NONETHELESS WOULD AFFECT ITS INTERESTS, E.G. MANY FRENCH CONSIDER THE US-SOVIET AGREEMENT ON THE PREVENTION OF NUCLEAR WAR AS A CASE IN POINT: AND, THE EC PROPOSAL OF LAST MARCH TO MEET WITH THE ARAB STATES IS AN EXAMPLE OF AN ISSUE ON WHICH THE US DID NOT RECEIVE SUFFICIENT INFORMATION PRIOR TO AN EC INTERNAL DECISION. NUMEROUS OTHER EXAMPLES COULD BE CITED BY BOTH SIDES.

4. WE BELIEVE THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN INFORMING AND CONSULTING IS OF KEY IMPORTANCE. WE UNDERSTAND INFORMING TO MEAN SIMPLY TELLING THE OTHER PARTY WHAT WE INTEND TO DO BEFORE A DECISION IS ANNOUNCED, AND CONSULTATION TO MEAN NOT MERELY LETTING THE OTHER PARTY KNOW ABOUT OUR INTENTIONS, BUT DOING SO IN DEPTH AND GIVING THE OTHER PARTY AN OPPORTUNITY TO INFLUENCE THE DECISION. THIS MEANS THAT CONSULTATION MUST BE UNDERTAKEN AT A POINT IN THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS BEFORE INTENTIONS HARDEN INTO FIRM DECISIONS.

5. WE RECOGNIZE IT IS NOT EASY TO STRIKE THE RIGHT BALANCE BETWEEN PROPOSING AN ISSUE FOR CONSULTATION TOO EARLY, I.E. BEFORE ENOUGH BUREAUCRATIC SPADE-WORK HAS BEEN DONE TO MAKE AN EXCHANGE OF VIEWS WORTHWHILE, AND DELAYING CONSULTATIONS UNTIL AFTER POLICIES HAVE BEEN ESSENTIALLY DECIDED, IN WHICH CASE "CONSULTATION" BECOMES

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A EUPHEMISM FOR "INFORMING." BUT IF THE US AND THE NINE ARE NOT ABLE TO MUSTER THE POLITICAL WILL TO APPROACH CONSULTATIONS WITH ENOUGH FLEXIBILITY SO THAT POSITIONS CAN BE MODIFIED WHEN WARRANTED, THE EXERCISE IS LIKELY TO CREATE MORE PROBLEMS THAN IT RESOLVES. MOREOVER, FOR CONSULTATIONS TO WORK, ADEQUATE TIME MUST BE ALLOWED, PARTICULARLY FOR THE COMPLICATED PROCEDURES THAT CHARACTERIZE MULTILATERAL RELATIONS.

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

6. FOR CONSULTATIONS TO BE MORE THAN PRO FORMA THERE
MUST BE DISCUSSIONS IN DEPTH WHICH WE RECOGNIZE RAISES
THE DILEMMA OF REACHING A BALANCE BETWEEN SECRECY AND

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PAGE 01 PARIS 12008 02 OF 02 171500Z

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AMEMBASSY ROME
USMISSION NATO

S E C R E T SECTION 02 OF 02 PARIS 12008

EXDIS

SUBMITTING THE ISSUE TO THE BUREAUCRACY. WE BELIEVE THAT
THE IMPORTANT ISSUES BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND
EUROPE AND THE UNITED STATES AND FRANCE ARE THOSE TAKEN
AT LEAST IN THE CASE OF FRANCE, MUST HAVE SUPPORT AT BOTH
THE TOP AND WITH THE SENIOR WORKING LEVEL OF THE GOVERNMENT.

IF THE US IS TO HAVE AN IMPAC
TE ATMOSPHERE
IN FRANCE AND BE ABLE TO CHANGE ATTITUDES OF FRENCH
LEADERS AND THE BUREAUCRACY, IT SEEMS TO US THAT A GREAT
DEAL OF THE CONSULTATIVE PROCESS SHOULD BE CARRIED ON
BY THE EMBASSY AT THE ELYSEE AND THE QUAI OR WHATEVER

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

MINISTRY IS INVOLVED, AND TO DO IT AT THE MOST EFFECTIVE
OF THOSE DIFFERENT LEVELS, TAKING INTO CONSIDERATION BOTH
THE SUBJECT MATTER AND ITS SENSITIVITY AND CLASSIFICATION.
MOREOVER, BECAUSE MANY OF THE ISSUES WHICH TOUCH ON FRANCO

AMERICAN AND AMERICAN RELATIONS ARE
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AFFECTED BY PUBLIC OPINION OR PREJUDICE, THE EMBASSY, IF
BROUGHT IN AT AN EARLY STAGE OF CONSULTATIONS, COULD HAVE
A POSITIVE IMPACT ON PUBLIC OPINION THROUGH APPROPRIATE CON-
TACT WITH THE MEDIA AND WITH OPINION MAKERS AT THE
VARIOUS LEVELS OF THE BUREAUCRACY. RECOGNIZING THE RISKS
INVOLVED IN TERMS OF LEAKS AND PREMATURE DISCLOSURES OF
US POLICY THINKING, AND RECOGNIZING THAT THIS APPROACH IS

POTENTIALLY COMPLEX AND TIME-CONSUMING, WE NONETHELESS
BELIEVE IT IS THE ONLY WAY THAT THE GROUNDWORK CAN BE
PROPERLY LAID FOR CONSULTATIONS AT THE MINISTERIAL LEVEL
AND ULTIMATELY AT THE SUMMIT. FINALLY, THIS IS PROBABLY
THE SUREST WAY TO NURTURE THE CONSULTATIVE HABIT SO
NECESSARY FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF POLITICAL WILL DESCRIBED
ABOVE.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS: AS SUGGESTED IN PARA 11 REFTEL B,
THE SUMMIT MEETING IN MOSCOW THIS SUMMER OFFERS A GOOD
OPPORTUNITY TO DEMONSTRATE TO THE EUROPEANS THAT WE
ARE PREPARED TO ENGAGE IN PRIOR SUBSTANTIVE CONSULTATIONS
WITH THEM ON ISSUES THAT EFFECT THEIR INTERESTS.

BUT TO DO SO IN THE SENSE THAT WE HAVE USED CONSULTATIONS
WOULD MEAN ENGAGING IN PRIOR SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSIONS
WITH THE EUROPEANS ON THE SUBJECT PLANNED BY THE PRESIDENT
AND THE SECRETARY FOR DISCUSSION WITH THE RUSSIANS. IT IS

NOT TOO EARLY NOW TO BEGIN SUCH CONSULTATION, TO EXPLAIN
TO THE EUROPEANS WHAT WE HOPE TO ACHIEVE IN MOSCOW,
FRANKLY TO DISCUSS THE PITFALLS THAT MAY BE INVOLVED
AND TO EXPLAIN HOW THE SUMMIT FITS INTO THE OVERALL PIC-
TURE OF WESTERN SECURITY. THIS WOULD GIVE THE EUROPEANS
THE OPPORTUNITY TO DESCRIBE THEIR HOPES AND CONCERNS

AS THEY RELATE TO THE US-USSR SUMMIT. IN THIS INSTANCE,
NATO BRUSSELS WOULD SEEM TO OFFER THE BEST FOCAL POINT
FOR A COMPREHENSIVE CONSULTATION LAUNCHED AT US INITIATIVE
BACKSTOPPED TO THE DEGREE NECESSARY AND DESIRABLE BY
EMBASSIES IN THE VARIOUS NATO CAMPTALS. IT COULD CUL-
MINATE IN A PRESIDENTIAL VISIT TO NATO ON THE WAY TO
MOSCOW. WE ARE HOPEFUL THAT SUCH AN UNDERTAKING COULD
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Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

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SERVE AS AN EXAMPLE FOR FUTURE CONSULTATIONS BASED ON

A SENSE OF "POLITICAL WILL." CONVERSELY, SHOULD WE CHOOSE TO AVOID GENUINE CONSULTATION WITH THE EUROPEANS ON THE SUBSTANCE OF THE US-USSR SUMMIT, WE MUST ANTICIPATE THAT THE EUROPEANS WILL BE RELUCTANT TO ACCEPT CONSULTATION PROCEDURES THAT SEEM TO REQUIRE A GREATER COMMITMENT FROM THE NINE THAN FROM THE UNITED STATES. AFTER THE US-USSR SUMMIT, IT WOULD OBVIOUSLY BE HELPFUL IF AN EMISSARY OF THE PRESIDENT WERE TO VISIT BRUSSELS TO GIVE A REPORT ON THE VISIT.
IRWIN.

NOTE BY OC/T: PARIS 12008 SEC 2/2 GARBLED TEXT AS RECEIVED,
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